

Cable Advisory Committee Minutes

November 9, 2009

Approved December 14, 2009

Present: William R. Tice, Jr., Chair; Justin Romeo; Michael Tattersall, and Elizabeth D. Barnett.

1. Meeting called to order at 7:31 p.m.
2. Minutes were reviewed and approved with no corrections.
3. The two Cable Services options for negotiations (formal and informal)

Mr. Tice initiated the discussion on the action items which had been assigned at the last meeting. Elizabeth Barnett shared materials from possible legal counsel options for cable services negotiations. Included in these materials were articles on timelines, guidelines and past municipal clients.

After reviewing articles on cable services rules/guidance supplied by potential counsel, Barnett made an inquiry to Timothy Goddard, Town Administrator about possible correspondence with Comcast (she was assigned to the Committee in April 2009), on the negotiation process. She had learned in the materials supplied, that there are two types of negotiations, formal and informal. The formal option, includes an ascertainment period, which must be initiated 36 months prior to the expiration of the municipal cable services contract. negotiation options.

4. Evaluation of possible cable services legal counsel services.

Discussion, lead by Mr. Tice ensued on the two legal firms, William H. Solomon and Epstein & August, which had sent the CAC proposals. A third firm, Deutsch Williams, also Town Counsel, offered that it could provide these services at its current billing rates.

The CAC reached consensus that it would be beneficial to any recommendation to the Board of Selectmen, to have members of the CAC, review the two firms provided references, particularly with comparable sized client-towns. It was agreed that six towns would be queried.

Mrs. Barnett was assigned the action item to have both firms submit minimum and maximum cost estimates.

The CAC will ask each reference the following questions:

- 1) What was worthwhile in the provision of legal services?
- 2) What was the most important factor?
- 3) What was missed?
- 4) What was the process like?

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Mrs. Barnett shared that seven surveys had been returned. The majority of answers fell into two categories: 1) Requests for better rates for seniors; and 2) Requests for better cable selections.

Discussion followed on the most efficient (cost and time) way to reach the Town. Mrs. Barnett shared that the Town website did not include a survey capability (it was an option that had not been purchased). It was agreed that the Town Clerk's offer to include the CAC survey with the Town Census in January, was the best option.

5. CAC goals and objectives. Mr. Tice requested that the CAC Minutes include the list of possible goals and objectives (in the new Comcast Contract) that had been developed by the Committee (not ranked):
 - Cash upfront
 - Cash outlay, equipment
 - Senior rate (modified)
 - Fiber cable from Town Hall to Corey Auditorium (cost?)
 - Increase Franchise fee from 3% to 5%
 - Cameras, lights, green screen, in schools for educational coverage
 - Backhaul Carlisle broadcasts to CC-TV studio
 - Highland Building studio?
6. Next meeting scheduled for December 14th.
7. Meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.